

## porcelain, ivory, steel by cathect

**Category:** IT (2017), Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** M/M, crossover fic, will-centric ryers

**Language:** English

**Relationships:** Will Byers/Richie Tozier

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-11-25

**Updated:** 2017-11-25

**Packaged:** 2022-04-03 05:00:21

**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 1,455

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

When Richie asks him on the first date, Will says yes. And then he says yes to every date after that.

-

or the (will-centric) one where someone finally loves will without fearing that they'll break him.

## porcelain, ivory, steel

### Author's Note:

a few notes about this fic:

- the details of the crossover aren't really important, but richie and mike aren't related.
- richie and will are both 18 in this.
- this was kind of a "character study" sort of fic.

big thank you to erin for all of her help with the end of this fic!!! i literally couldn't have done it without you.

(title taken from "a storm of swords" by george r.r. martin)

*"[Be with] someone who tends to you like you're made of glass but reminds you [that] you are made of steel."*

— @hisxowl on twitter

-

Will wants everyone to stop looking at him.

Literally everyone. He's sick of the concern and the worry and the *pity* in their eyes. He's gone through hell twice now, and survived, and everybody still seems to look at him like he's made of glass. Like if you touched him too hard, he'd shatter.

(It's incredibly possible that he would, but he doesn't want to be *treated* like it.)

He expects it from his mother. His beautiful, overprotective, strong-as-hell mother. That's just the mark of being a good parent, he thinks — she'd give her life for his, and he appreciates it as much as he fears it.

He expects it from Jonathan. The brother that practically replaced their father. The one that showed him how to find an escape in

music. In lyrics and chords and melodies. He's always looked out for Will more than he looks out for himself. It's infuriating, but it's comforting; to know that Jonathan will always be there for him, even when he doesn't want him to be.

Hell, he even expects it from Hopper. There's a part of Will that thinks the chief's paternal warmth towards him is due to the fact that he's dating Will's mother. But there's another part that knows this is just who Hopper is— much like Steve, Hopper seems to have sort of adopted all of the party. He enforces their curfews and helps them all with school. He even shows up for science fairs every once in awhile, a proud smile tucked under his unkempt facial hair.

Will expects it from them, but he doesn't expect it from his friends.

He doesn't expect the way that everyone starts to tiptoe around him. The way that they let him pick what they're watching almost every single movie night. The way that Dustin seems to swallow a joke about him every time the opportunity to make one arises. The way Mike won't hug him as tight after a D&D victory.

It's tiring, *maddening*, the way they act like Will isn't *Will* anymore.

It wasn't this bad last time. They weren't like this when he came back from the Upside Down, weren't like this even when he was going to see Dr. Owens because he was having his *now memories*. It's almost like they had some sort of secret meeting without him and decided that he's too fragile for the sort of friendship they used to share.

They're still his friends, of course. That'll never change. They still sit together in every class, bike down to The Hawk to see the latest sci-fi thriller, play D&D on the weekends. But there's something off about all of it, like there's a tension in the air that Will just can't seem to find the weak spot of, can't seem to break.

It only gets worse as the next year passes. Mike and El get more serious, as do Max and Lucas. Dustin actually manages, with the help of Steve Harrington, to get a sophomore girl to look at him. A girl that looks an awful lot like Nancy Wheeler, unsurprisingly. They all pull away, in their own time, as childhood friends usually do. All except Will.

Will, as much as he tries, can't seem to do any pulling of his own.

He prides himself on the fact that he's the one that keeps them from splitting off completely. He refuses to give up on their *Dungeons* nights, even on the few occasions that one of the boys can't make it (Max and El are always willing to step in, anyway). Their movie nights become less frequent, but once they start getting cars, it's easier to meet up in town for dinner or just to hang out at the arcade.

None of this seems to change the way they look at him though, like he might break if a gust of wind hit him too hard. *It's been five years since I got possessed by a smoke monster from another world, guys*, he wants to say. *When are you going to treat me like you used to?*

And then there's Richie.

Richie Tozier moves to Hawkins the summer after their junior year of high school, bursts into the party's lives with his wild hair and even wilder fashion choices. After a brief adjustment period, mostly due to his incredible resemblance to Mike, Richie blends into the group pretty seamlessly.

He and Lucas bond over their mutual desire to destroy each other at *Dragon's Lair*. Max invites him to the skatepark at least once a week, and El starts to pick up a lot of dumb slang from him (Mike's not entirely happy with *that* development). He and Dustin practically finish each other's sentences, and Steve is more than happy to take another kid under his wing. Even Hopper and Joyce seem to get a kick out of having him around.

But no one enjoys his company more than Will does.

Richie, as it would appear, is exactly Will's type in a way that shocks everyone. Will laughs at every dumb joke and blushes at every dirty comment Richie mutters to him like the rest of their friends aren't within earshot. He likes the way Richie talks to him, like he's something, *someone* to be desired.

But, mostly, Will likes the way Richie treats him like he's strong. Like he's made of steel instead of china. When he hears about what Will has been through, he never once looks at him with pity, never acts

like it makes him any less. In fact, Richie thinks “it’s kind of hot” that Will once got possessed.

When Richie asks him on the first date, Will says yes. And then he says yes to every date after that.

Richie kisses him for the first time on a freezing Tuesday evening in December. It’s hard, messy, pressed up against the front door of the Byers’ house until Will goes weak in the knees. Richie kisses him so hard that Will thinks his lips might bruise, and doesn’t stop until Joyce flicks on the porch lights and bangs on the door for the boys to come in before they freeze to death— *yes, you too, Richie*.

Richie loves Will as hard as he kisses him. His affection is all *bite* and *gravel*, calloused hands on Will’s hips and teeth in his neck. Will wakes up most mornings with hickeys and scratch marks and the taste of Richie on his tongue and it’s *intoxicating*.

Mike confronts him about it after a while, tells him that he doesn’t think Richie is good for him. *He’s too rough*, he says. *Too turbulent and unpredictable*.

Maybe he’s right. Maybe Richie is rough and unpredictable like a thunderstorm. But he’s cleansing and calming like one too. He’s everything Will wants, gives him everything he needs, and makes him feel powerful. Like he’s a fucking force of nature.

And, more than that, Richie makes sure to remind Will that he has *always been one*.

He tells Mike as much, and he’s never been quite as good with words as Mike— there’s a reason Will doesn’t plan their campaigns— but he spits all of it out with the force of the frustration that’s been building up in his chest for years. Without hesitation, and only a barely-there waver in his voice. When he’s done, he’s a little out of breath, and the look in Mike’s eyes makes it clear that Will’s words are no longer falling on deaf ears.

*So what if Richie is like a bull in a china shop sometimes?* He asks sharply. *So what?*

Will isn't china; he's not something to be put behind a glass cabinet door, doesn't need to be labeled "handle with care." He's not about to break, not even in Richie's endearingly clumsy hands.

After Will leaves the Wheelers' house, leaving behind a sufficiently shaken Mike, he forgoes driving to his own house in favor of Richie's. He doesn't relay the entire argument to him, doesn't need to— for all the ridiculous things he is, Richie is surprisingly insightful— but feels better all the same. There's a weight off his chest now and it already feels easier to breathe.

Richie asks him if he wants to go somewhere, and Will doesn't hesitate. He doesn't ask where or for how long, doesn't think about what anyone else would say:

*Be safe, Will. Take a jacket, Will. Don't be out too late, Will. Careful, careful, careful.*

He just nods, letting Richie tuck him under his arm and lead the way.

#### **Author's Note:**

thank you so much for reading!

drop a comment below letting me know what you think! ps: keep an eye out for more ryers content from me, as i'm determined to write more for this soft ship.

follow me on tumblr, @devilstrip.